

Build solidarity with shipyard workers strike in Bath, Maine

BY JOHN STUDER

The strike by over 4,300 shipbuilders, members of Machinists Union Local S6, against the bosses at the Bath Iron Works in Maine is the most important labor battle in the U.S. today. Workers there deserve the solidarity of working people everywhere.

The unionists voted overwhelmingly to go on strike June 22 against the refusal of the shipyard bosses, a division of giant military contractor General Dynamics, to back off from their “last, best and final” concession contract offer. At issue is the company’s intention to bring in more contract labor, threatening workers’ jobs; to cut back seniority protection on jobs and shifts; and to force workers to pay more for health care.

The union organized a “delay their ride home” reception for strikebreakers, Jaimie Bellefleur, one of the striking union members, told the *Militant*. She described how some 40 strikers

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Prison officials in Pennsylvania revoke ban on the ‘Militant’

BY TERRY EVANS

In an important victory for the rights of workers behind bars and of the press, Pennsylvania state prison officials overturned Camp Hill State Correctional Institution’s ban on issue no. 28 of the *Militant* on Aug. 3. The paper’s attorney, David Goldstein, had informed prison officials that the *Militant* was prepared to appeal the impoundment.

The reversal of the ban was made possible because an inmate who subscribes to the paper mailed the *Militant* to report his issue had been impounded and he was challenging the ban. “Please help me fight out there,” he wrote.

When Goldstein contacted Diana Woodside, the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections official responsible for reviewing literature bans in state prisons, she said Camp Hill hadn’t sent her a notice of impoundment. She told Goldstein to send the

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Workers need a labor party, control of production, safety



Militant/Bernie Senter

Gabby Prosser, left, gets signatures from five women at Walmart in Federal Way, Washington, to put SWP presidential ticket on ballot. Socialist Workers Party presents a fighting working-class program to build the union movement to defend our jobs, wages and working conditions.

‘A labor party can organize workers in their millions’

Alyson Kennedy, Socialist Workers Party candidate for president, issued the following statement Aug. 5. Malcolm Jarrett is the party’s candidate for vice president.

SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY STATEMENT

Working people need to build our own party, a labor party, to use to organize us in our millions to stand up to the efforts of the bosses, their parties and their government to push the burden of the crisis of their dog-eat-dog capitalist

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Join drive to put Socialist Workers Party on the ballot

BY NAOMI CRAINE

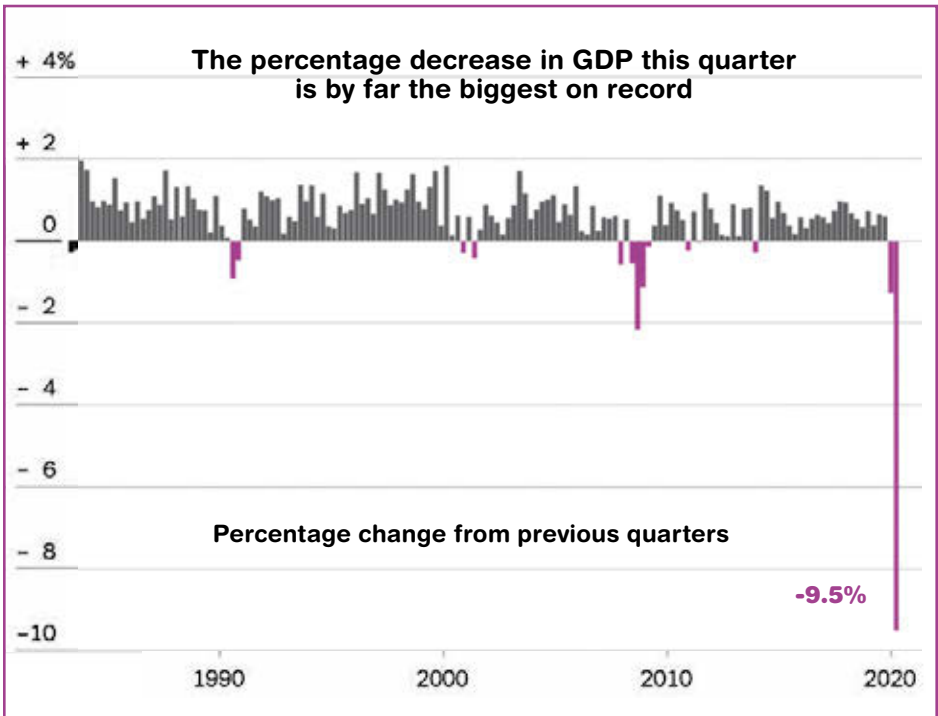
FARIBAULT, Minn. — Socialist Workers Party campaigners are knocking on doors and meeting working people in Minnesota, New Jersey, Tennessee and Washington to win support for the fight to get a working-class party on the ballot in 2020.

Thousands are signing petitions to get Alyson Kennedy, the SWP candidate for president, and Malcolm Jarrett for vice president on the ballot. Many are learning about the party’s platform, publications and activities.

The SWP says workers need to build their own party, a labor party, to organize millions of workers to

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Workers fight bosses’ attempts to solve deepening crisis on our backs



BY ROY LANDERSEN

Working people from the U.S. to China, Germany to Iran face ongoing attacks from the propertied rulers, as bosses and their governments seek to solve the deepening crisis of the capitalist system on our backs. This crisis is greatly exacerbated by the continuing coronavirus epidemic.

Workers are looking for ways to battle against bosses’ attacks on wages, working conditions and jobs. And for ways to build and strengthen unions and to find a working-class political road forward.

The most important labor battle in the U.S. is the strike by 4,300 shipbuilding workers against a union-busting attack by the bosses at the Bath Iron Works. Fights like this, as well as thousands of daily on-the-job skirmishes in factories, warehouses and retail outlets like Walmart, are crucial to the development of a broader working-class movement and rebuilding our unions.

One important new workers’ battle is a strike by thousands of Iranian oil workers in the South Pars gas field de-

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Intervention by capitalist rivals is disaster for toilers in Libya

BY TERRY EVANS

Nine years after Washington — with the aid of its imperialist rivals in London and Paris — intervened in Libya’s civil war, launching massive airstrikes that helped overthrow the regime of Moammar Gadhafi in 2011, there is still no stable government there. The country has become a battleground for foreign capitalist powers seeking oil — Libya has the largest oil reserves in Africa — and jockeying for influence throughout the region.

Working people in Libya are caught in the middle, facing unending foreign intervention and battles by rival capitalist forces.

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Court backs Nevada gov't attack on right to worship

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

In a serious attack on the constitutional right of freedom to worship, the U.S. Supreme Court voted July 24 to refuse to suspend a public health order imposed by Nevada Gov. Steve Sisolak limiting attendance at church services. It was part of a series of edicts issued under the guise of stopping the spread of coronavirus.

This is the second such ruling by the black-robed arbiters of “justice” in the past two months restricting the First Amendment’s blanket protection for the right to worship. These are rights working people need today to defend ourselves against government interference in our lives and struggles.

In both cases the four so-called liberal justices — Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Stephen Breyer, Sonia Sotomayor and Elena Kagan — were joined by Chief Justice John Roberts, an appointee of George W. Bush, in the majority. In the latest case they failed to give any explanation for the ruling, simply writing, “The application for injunctive relief presented to Justice Kagan and by her referred to the Court is denied.”

Calvary Chapel Dayton Valley, a small church in rural Nevada, about 45 miles east of Reno, had filed a lawsuit against the Democratic governor, saying his order limiting to 50 people the number who could attend indoor religious services discriminated against churches, violating First Amendment rights. The governor has allowed casinos and other businesses to admit up to 50% of their capacity.

The church said it wanted to conduct services with 90 people present, a figure

amounting to 50% of their fire code capacity. Church officials made clear this would be done with appropriate social distancing and other measures to counter the spread of COVID-19.

Lawyers for the church wrote, “If the governor deems it acceptable for secular assemblies to occur at 50 percent capacity at casinos, restaurants, bars, gyms and fitness facilities, indoor and outdoor theme parks, bowling alleys, water parks, pools, arcades and more, he must apply the 50 percent capacity rule to constitutionally protected worship services.”

Justice Neil Gorsuch wrote a succinct and pointed dissenting opinion in defense of the Constitution. “This is a simple case,” he said. “Under the Governor’s edict, a 10-screen ‘multiplex’ may host 500 moviegoers at any time. A casino, too, may cater to hundreds at once.

“Large numbers and close quarters are fine in such places. But churches, synagogues, and mosques are banned from admitting more than 50 worshippers. But the First Amendment prohibits such obvious discrimination against the exercise of religion. The world we inhabit today, with a pandemic upon us, poses unusual challenges. But there is no world in which the Constitution permits Nevada to favor Caesars Palace over Calvary Chapel.”

In contrast, Linda Greenhouse, in a July 30 *New York Times* op-ed column hailed the decision, claiming the justices who voted against disproportionately restricting attendance at church services were “seeking to elevate religious interests over those of secular society”! She denounced them



Erik Kabik Photography/Media Punch/PPX



Above, Paris Las Vegas casino reopens June 18 based on Nevada governor’s 50% capacity rule, but churches and other religious institutions could only admit 50 people total. Supreme Court ruled against Calvary Chapel Dayton Valley’s challenge to this blow against freedom to worship.

for seeking to “turn a public health issue into a religious crusade.”

These rulings come down as there are increasing attacks on Jews, Catholics, Muslims and others over their religion. Jews in New York, New Jersey and elsewhere have been scapegoated as responsible for the spread of coronavirus. Synagogues have been targeted for police raids, Jewish-owned stores have been shot up and Hasidic Jews in Brooklyn have been attacked on the street.

Dangerous to workers’ rights

Over the past month statues of Jesus Christ have been damaged in Colorado, New York, Massachusetts, Missouri and elsewhere. On Sunday, July 11, a minivan crashed through the front door of the Queen of Peace Catholic Church in Ocala, Florida, and the driver threw an incendiary device, setting the church on fire during preparation for services.

Mosques have been attacked and Muslims threatened and set upon.

In the earlier case in May, the Supreme Court rejected a similar challenge by the South Bay United Pentecostal Church in Chula Vista, California, which sought to overturn an executive order by Gov. Gavin Newsom.

In defending the court’s ruling in that case, Roberts wrote, “Although California’s guidelines place restrictions on places of worship, those restrictions appear consistent with the free exercise clause of the First Amendment.”

Following the victory of the First American Revolution, the Bill of Rights was added to the Constitution under the pressure of protests by small farmers demanding explicit written guarantees against government interference in their lives and political activities.

The very first of these amendments forbids the government from establishing a state religion and from prohibiting anyone from free exercise of the religion of their choice. It also forbids the government from placing any limit on freedom of speech, or of the press, or “the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.”

Roberts argued in the California case that state officials must be given flexibility to make judgments when it comes to public health. But the Constitution permits no such thing! The Bill of Rights was forced on the government precisely to protect certain “inalienable” rights from *all* government interference.

“Flexibility” on rights aims to allow the capitalist rulers to have more play in attacking political rights and workers’ struggles. And this is especially dangerous in the context of today’s partisan factional warfare among the bourgeois parties and politicians.

Defending the right to freedom of worship and all the rights written into the Constitution remains central to advancing struggles by the working class against the capitalist rulers today.

THE MILITANT

Health care in Cuba is a human right!

Events worldwide celebrated the 67th anniversary of the opening of the Cuban Revolution. Today, 30,000 Cuban health care workers serve in 60 countries in an act of solidarity. “They don’t see health care as a business, but a human right,” said Cuban Ambassador Edgardo Valdés.



Militant/Terry Coggan
Cuba’s ambassador to New Zealand, Edgardo Valdés speaks in Auckland July 25.

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The Militant

Vol. 84/No. 32

Closing news date: August 5, 2020

Editor: John Studer

Managing Editor: Terry Evans

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Published weekly except for one week in January, one week in September.

Business Manager: Valerie Johnson

The Militant (ISSN 0026-3885), 306 W. 37th Street, 13th floor, New York, NY 10018.

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Website: www.themilitant.com

Correspondence concerning subscriptions or changes of address should be addressed to the Militant, 306 W. 37th Street, 13th floor, New York, NY 10018.

Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Militant, 306 W. 37th Street, 13th floor, New York, NY 10018.

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Workers reject both federal cops and disruption by antifa

BY SETH GALINSKY

Working people in Portland and elsewhere welcome the announcement that the administration of Donald Trump is withdrawing its use of federal cops — including a Border Patrol SWAT team that is trained to act like special forces — around the U.S. courthouse and other government buildings in Portland. When the federal government deploys heavily armed cops on city streets, it’s almost never good for the working class.

That doesn’t mean working people support the provocative and disruptive actions by antifa and other “anti-fascist” forces, which gave the government a pretext for bringing in the special forces-like units in the first place. These groups undermine and weaken the fight against police violence.

Not that the local cops act much differently than the federal ones. Portland’s cops have also indiscriminately fired tear gas at protesters and brutalized those who got in their way. On July 30 they drove protesters from camps they had set up in downtown city parks.

Oregon state troopers have replaced the federal cops “protecting” federal buildings.

For participants in the various protest actions in Portland over the last several months, it’s been no secret that there are two separate and competing actions in the city every night.

The editors of the *New York Times* — whose policy is to blame Trump for everything they think is wrong in hopes of driving him from office — and other liberal and middle-class radical media lie about what is going on in Portland. A good example is the July 29 *Times* piece by senior columnist Nicholas Kristof, entitled “Help Me Find Trump’s ‘Anarchists’ in Portland.” He tries to cover up for the disruption and destruction by antifa and similar groups at the federal building.

‘Two different things’

These media insist on calling all those on the streets just “protesters.” But the antifa aren’t “protesters.” They describe themselves openly as combatants. “Violence is coming: may as well have fun while we wait,” one wrote on their website, “It’s Going Down,” describing how they set fires and initiated other mayhem. They denounce those who just “protest,” and seek to entrap them in the melee.

This has nothing to do with building a movement that can take on police brutality and win prosecution of the cops who killed Breonna Taylor in Louisville, Kentucky, and many others.

Articles in the *Oregonian* and by Reuters reveal the real story. They show how there are two distinctly different things going on every night. “A peaceful demonstration against racial injustice and police brutality begins at nightfall at the central police precinct,” Reuters reported July 31. “Protesters chant: ‘George Floyd. Breonna Taylor. Black Lives Matter.’”

“As midnight looms,” a small band goes into action, “trying to attack the courthouse throwing fireworks and objects at police and agents over a fence guarding the building,” Reuters reporter Deborah Bloom writes.

Then she quotes from 22-year-old Black male nurse Najee Gow, who got active after Minneapolis cops killed George Floyd. “There are two different protests. This is beautiful,” Gow tells Bloom, pointing to the main body of demonstrators at the police precinct. “This is destruction,” he said, nodding to those waiting to confront federal agents outside the courthouse.

“If you really want to respect Black lives, and if you really want to respect Breonna Taylor and George Floyd, then you’d be listening to the movement instead of antagonizing police,” Gow said.

A few days earlier, the *Oregonian* reported how Gow had gone to the antifa gathering at the federal building to urge them to stand down and join the broader, peaceful movement.

Some anonymous antifa supporters responded by posting hostile comments. “Guy & his crew are trying to defang and co-opt for their own personal gain,” wrote one identified only as Buffalo Soldier. “Don’t let these asshats co-opt and turn this into a meaningless instagram worthy Pepsi ad performance show to launch their brand influencer careers.”

“F--k peaceful we’ve tried that it doent [sic] work send a message they will never forget,” posted someone called Hamelech.

“The protesters aren’t all peaceful, nor are they primarily violent,” writes Kristof, despite these facts. “They’re a complicated weave.”

But it’s not complicated. Neither antifa and self-proclaimed anarchist groupings, nor liberal apologists like

Build solidarity with Bath shipyard workers’ strike

Continued from front page

circled the gates very slowly in their cars for three hours, interrupting scabs’ attempts to get out of the plant July 31.

Bellefleur also reported that no more strikebreakers have crossed their picket lines in the last week.

For the first time since the strike began, union negotiating committee members and company officials met, along with a federal mediator, for contract discussions Aug. 3. Another session took place the following day. Committee members reported to the members some progress was made.

The bosses had counted on being able to divide union members between longer-term workers with more seniority and newer members with less union experience. But this hasn’t been the case.

Both newer and veteran workers came together to vote overwhelmingly to strike and have joined together in

Veterans against cop brutality rally in Pittsburgh



Patti Gerhauser

“Veterans from different generations — from the Vietnam War, from the post 9/11 generation, joined the protest,” Aryanna Hunter, left, told the *Militant* in a phone interview the day after an Aug. 2 demonstration she organized in Pittsburgh of Veterans for Black Lives.”

“Many of those attending saw and experienced racism in the military,” she said. “And when you look at the number of people killed by the police, you’ll find many are armed forces’ veterans, and this is often overlooked in press coverage.”

Some 25 people attended the protest against cop brutality, including veterans from “the Marine Corps, the Air Force and the Army, Black and white, men and women,” Hunter said.

She had organized a several hundred-strong protest against cop brutality in the small town of Murrysville where she lives outside Pittsburgh in June. “The number of folks turning out all across rural Pennsylvania is amazing,” she told the *Pittsburgh Tribune* at that rally. “If we’re going to change anything we also have to show our neighbors that Black lives matter.”

As a 10 year old she had watched her own father, who is Black, “pinned down by police officers just like George Floyd was and put in the back of a police car on a minor marijuana charge.”

“It’s an atrocity that the officers who killed Breonna Taylor have not been arrested,” she said. Public actions have taken place around the country and internationally demanding the arrest and prosecution of the three cops who shot Taylor dead March 13. They used a “no-knock” warrant to break into her apartment, firing over 20 rounds and killing the emergency-room technician after her boyfriend had fired one bullet, suspecting a break-in at her home. The cops made no effort to get Taylor medical assistance in the five minutes that she lay dying.

“I joined the Army as an act of patriotism two months after 9/11,” Hunter said, serving in some of the first on-the-ground troop deployments to Iraq in 2003. “But even back then I didn’t support the Iraq War.”

— TERRY EVANS

Kristof are looking to build a movement that can force the capitalist rulers to rein in the police. They are not looking to broaden the fight against police brutality by organizing protests designed to reach out and involve the

trade unions, churches and other organizations of working people.

But broadening out the fight is the only road to a more powerful, united working-class movement that can win more victories.

picketing, rallies and other activities.

General Dynamics is also counting on its size, profitability and weight with the military brass to wear down the union fighters. Its headquarters is close to the Pentagon and Bath Iron Works sits on a backlog of 10 years of military orders.

In its 2020 issue reporting on the companies with the highest profits, *Fortune* magazine said General Dynamics was climbing in the rankings. Its revenues rose last year to \$39.4 billion, including \$3.5 billion in profit. For each of the last three years General Dynamics CEO Phebe Novakovic, a former CIA operative, took home \$20 million.

The workers have their power to shut down production, which they have used. The bosses say they’re hiring strikebreakers and claim things are going well in the yard. But “they would have to be busing in hundreds of workers to get production going,” John LaPointe, who has worked in the shipyard for 31 years, told the *Militant*.

The other thing the workers have — and need more of — is solidarity from fellow workers across the country. Salty Boyz Food Truck in Bath, with financial support from some other local small businesses, brought food for over 100 picketers on the line. And two area food banks are bringing provisions to the Bath Senior Center on Aug. 10 for strikers to pick up when they come to get their weekly strike pay there.

A local bar is organizing a solidarity event with a live band Aug. 7.

You can help. Get the word out about their fight to your co-workers, your union, church or other groups. Come to Bath and walk the picket line. Send messages and contributions to the strike fund at IAM Local S6, 722 Washington St., Bath, ME 04530, or donations through PayPal at www.paypal.me/LocalLodgeS6.

Ved Dookhun in Albany, New York, contributed to this article.

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

MINNESOTA
Twin Cities

Build a Labor Party. For Workers Control of Production and Safety. Hear reports on the effort to put Socialist Workers Party presidential ticket of Alyson Kennedy and Malcolm Jarrett on ballot in Minnesota and other states. Speakers include: Dan Fein and Sergio Zambrana of SWP. Sat., Aug. 8. Reception, 7 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. Donation: \$5. 1821 University Ave., West, Room S-106A. Tel.: (651) 340-5586.

Help put SWP on the ballot!

Continued from front page

fight in our own interests and in the interests of all the exploited and oppressed. It explains that as workers fight to wrest control of production from profit-hungry bosses, growing numbers can be won to replacing capitalist rule with a workers and farmers government.

The SWP's ticket has already been certified for the ballot in Colorado and Vermont, and campaigners have met all the requirements to get on in Louisiana.

"The unions were important, but they're pretty powerless now," Mike Larson, a machinist, told Kennedy as he signed the petition outside a Walmart here. He liked Kennedy's explanation that workers needed a labor party, but wasn't confident it could be built.

"For decades officials have tied the unions to the Democratic Party, instead of organizing the ranks to fight in our own interests," Kennedy said. "That paralyzed us." A labor party that acts in the interests of all workers and seeks to unite us in struggle would find ready support from workers looking for ways to stand up to the bosses.

"We're going to see bigger struggles by working people, and opportunities to organize," Kennedy said. The party's platform explains workers need a union in every workplace — to fight the bosses' growing attacks on jobs, wages and working conditions.

Kennedy pointed to the importance of organizing solidarity with the 4,300 shipyard workers on strike in Bath, Maine, who are setting an example as they resist bosses' attempts to replace union members with subcontractors at lower wages.

Outside the Walmart in Roseville, a suburb of Minneapolis, a special education assistant in a charter school, Madison Elkins, got a copy of the *Militant*. "There's always a struggle for safety at work, but now you add a highly contagious disease," she told Kennedy.

"Teachers and other school workers — working closely with parents — need to take control over organizing school safely," Kennedy said. "That's an example of what we mean by fighting for workers control of production."

Kennedy described the response of Cuba's revolutionary government to the spread of the virus. "At the beginning of the epidemic Cuba organized millions of home visits to make sure that everyone who had symptoms got treatment. The 1959 revolution brought to power a government of workers and farmers, a government they can trust, not like the government here, which represents big business."

"Yes, here nobody trusts the government," Elkins said.

In Roseville, Kennedy spoke with

Stella Anderson, a janitor, who signed to put the SWP on the ballot. "I served three years in prison for a felony. When I got out it was hard to find a job," Anderson said. "Now I'm full-time, making \$16.72 an hour. My boyfriend works at a gas station. But we can't find an apartment because they require credit, so we spend all our income on paying for a hotel room."

By the end of the weekend, 381 people had signed to get the party on the ballot in Minnesota, well on the way to the goal of 2,400 before Aug. 18. Five people signed up for subscriptions to the *Militant*, and four got books to learn more about the Socialist Workers Party and its program.

To join a campaigning team in Minnesota over the next two weeks, contact the Minneapolis campaign office at: (651) 340-5586, or email: twin-cities.swp@gmail.com

Workers need a labor party

BY BETSEY STONE

SEATTLE — Supporters of the Socialist Workers Party presidential ticket campaigning here have collected more than 2,000 signatures, well over the requirement to put the candidates on the ballot. They have spoken with hundreds of workers about the party's action program to confront the economic and social crisis.

Alyson Kennedy will join supporters in the state capital in Olympia Aug. 7 to deliver the petitions, along with a number of letters, making clear the widespread support for the party's democratic right to be on the ballot.

Mark Downs, a retired longshore worker and former member of the executive board of International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 19 in Seattle sent a letter to the secretary of state urging him to put the party on the ballot. "The more choices there are on the ballot, the better," he wrote.

During a tour stop here, Kennedy and supporters campaigned outside a Walmart near the Boeing jet plant in Renton. Boeing, the largest private employer in the Seattle area, has laid off thousands of workers since the start of the pandemic.

"The Socialist Workers Party calls for a federally funded jobs program to put millions to work building things we need, like hospitals and schools and fixing the infrastructure," Kennedy told Subillie Sheldon, a retail worker who was recently laid off from his second job at the airport.

Sheldon was born and raised in the Marshall Islands and had friends from Bikini Atoll, the island where the U.S. rulers tested their nuclear bombs after



Militant/Jacquie Henderson

SWP vice presidential candidate Malcolm Jarrett with gas station workers Melinda Morales and David Mackman in Lebanon, Tennessee, as they sign to put party on the ballot. "We work hard but don't get enough money to live on," said Mackman. He invited Jarrett to meet his friends, relatives.

World War II, exposing islanders to dangerously high levels of radiation. Bikini Atoll remains contaminated to this day.

"Both the Democrats and Republicans were responsible for that crime," Kennedy said. "Workers need a labor party that would oppose Washington's wars and lead millions to challenge the rule of the wealthy who run this country."

When Kennedy knocked on her door, Maureen Carroll, who works at a mental health center, said she supported the protests against police killings but was against the violence of antifa and others attacking the federal building in Portland, Oregon.

"This is taking the focus away from the fight to change the cops," Carroll said. "We need to defund the police and to use some of this money for mental health."

Kennedy pointed to the need to fight for government-funded health care for all, including mental health. "But changing the nature of the police under capitalism isn't possible," she said. "The police are here to defend the ruling rich. They not only brutalize and kill people, but break strikes and other working-class struggles. This is not going to change so long as the wealthy are in power."

Carroll signed to put her on the ballot.

'Party's right to be heard'

BY RACHELE FRUIT
AND JACQUIE HENDERSON

KINGSPORT, Tenn. — "I believe anyone with a program has a right to be heard," said retiree Donna Hardy, 72, who used to work at the gigantic Eastman Chemical plant here. She bought a subscription to the *Militant*, signed the SWP petition, and got a copy of *Are They Rich Because They're Smart?* by SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes, saying she hopes "it helps me see that we're not helpless."

Campaigners met Hoyal Woodson, a retired contractor and rail worker, in Johnson City, where 90% of the population of 67,000 is Caucasian, and Donald Trump won the majority of the vote in 2016.

When campaigners outlined the party's call to build a labor party, Woodson said, "It's what's needed." He was happy to sign. His friend, James Short, a retired miner and United Mine Workers of America member, said, "Both of the parties are bad, but the Democrats are less bad."

"What we need to do is break from both of the bosses' parties," said SWP campaigner Arlene Rubinstein, pointing out that both have a long record helping bosses break workers' strikes and other struggles.

Across the street, this workers-correspondent met Lewis McCabe, a Walmart worker in Morristown. He is originally from Liberia and told us there is a large African community in Johnson City. "We are tired of voting lesser evil," he said. "We want our voices to be heard."

He got a subscription to the *Militant* and a copy of *The Turn to Industry: Forging a Proletarian Party* by Barnes. "Why don't you come by the Alatus African Market this afternoon where you can meet some of my friends?" he suggested.

Half-a-dozen workers signed the SWP petition there. One bought a copy of Thomas Sankara's *We Are Heirs of the World's Revolutions*. Sankara headed a revolutionary government in Burkina Faso in the 1980s that led working people to change their conditions and resist imperialism's plunder of their country.

"We keep working very hard but we don't get even enough money to live on," David Mackman said when he met SWP vice presidential candidate Malcolm Jarrett as he and Melinda Morales got off their shift at a gas station in Lebanon, July 31.

"We need a labor party that takes on the bosses' parties and gives voice to our class," Jarrett said.

Mackman and Morales signed to get the SWP's ticket on the ballot. Mackman invited Jarrett to return later that day so he could introduce the SWP candidate to relatives and neighbors. Several of them also signed the petition.

Down the block Robert Henley, a Walmart worker, signed to put the party on the ballot. "We have been really busy at work," he said. "I can see where things would be better if we had a say in safety measures on the job."

"That's true for all of us," replied Jarrett. "I work as a cook. You know what

Join the Socialist Workers Party campaign in 2020!

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**An update on the SWP
'stimulus' fund appeal
will appear in next
week's issue of
the 'Militant'**



Above, Stella Anderson, left, discusses road forward for working people with SWP presidential candidate Alyson Kennedy, in Roseville, Minnesota. Right, campaign supporter Nelson Gonzalez, at right, signs people up in Bayonne, New Jersey.



Militant photos: left, Ilona Gersh; right, Seth Galinsky

dangerous things can happen when the pressure is on to go faster and faster. We have to stand together to defend ourselves, fight for safety on the job.”

Samir Hazboun and Karl Butts knocked on Clark Harris’ door in Lebanon. “I worked for 17 years in a chemical plant here,” Harris said. “We could tell the chemicals were hurting us but the company wouldn’t do anything. When I got sick and had to have liver surgery they let me go. We need to stand together and fight for safety.” He signed to get the SWP ticket on the ballot and to become an elector and bought a copy of the *Militant*.

LaRissa Braden, a counselor for children’s services in Memphis, invited Jarrett and Tricia Mack, his sister-in-law, to a get-together at Braden’s home.

Jarrett said the recent widespread protests against police brutality showed how much stronger the working class is as a result of the fight in the 1950s and ’60s that put an end to Jim Crow segregation.

“What you’re doing with your campaign is good, but isn’t socialism a form of repressive control?” Braden asked Jarrett.

“Working people are the only force capable of solving the economic, moral and social crisis we face,” Jarrett said. “The Cuban Revolution is an example of a socialist revolution where millions of workers and farmers took power and run the country in the interests of our class.”

“Yes, we’re the ones that make the country roll,” Braden said.

“You want to bring back unions,” Mack said. “That’s good.”

“Our party is a party of workers fighting to build unions and strengthen them. We support the Bath, Maine, shipyard workers strike,” Jarrett said. “We take part in resistance on the job at Walmart, in the rail unions and other places we work.”

Mack contributed \$25 to the campaign and subscribed to the *Militant*.

In Bartlett, Kayla Bratcher, a college student and Chik-fil-A worker, told SWP campaigner Maggie Trowe that she’s “worried my aunt is going to get evicted.” Both Bratcher and her aunt work at the fast food restaurant and have been getting short hours. As a result, her aunt is behind on the rent. Bratcher agreed to be an elector and bought a subscription to the *Militant*,

and *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* and *Is Socialist Revolution in the US Possible?*

New Jersey campaign nears goal of 1,200 signatures

BY JOANNE KUNIANSKY

UNION CITY, N.J. — Supporters of the SWP ticket are closing in on their goal of 1,200 signatures to place the party’s presidential candidates on the ballot in New Jersey. By Aug. 4 they had collected well over 900.

Jarrett joined campaigners in Jersey City where they met Talicia Jackson. She asked, “What is your position on health care?”

“Health care is a social right,” Jarrett said. “The Cuban Revolution shows the kind of health care system we can have when working people are in control.” In Cuba, with a population of 11.3 million, 87 people have died from coronavirus over the last several months. In contrast, in New York City, with a population of almost 8.4 million at least 23,000 have died.

After reading the section of the SWP platform about the alliance between workers and farmers, Jackson said, “A

lot of Black farmers are losing land.”

“Yes, and Caucasian farmers as well,” Jarrett said.

“While campaigning in Vermont I learned that 25 dairy farmers had lost their farms just since the shutdown.”

“Workers and farmers need to join together in struggle. We need to fight to stop the banks from foreclosing on farmers and taking their land. In Cuba after the revolution farmers

won title to the land they worked.”

Jackson signed the petition and subscribed to the *Militant*.

When campaigner Joanne Kuniansky approached Alex Javier and two of his friends in Newark she said that workers needed to build a labor party, and to fight for a union in every workplace.

“Definitely! Unions have your back at work,” said Javier, a 22-year-old longshoreman and member of the International Longshoremen’s Association. All three signed up to put the SWP on the ballot.

Jacob Perasso contributed to this article.



Want to help campaign for the Socialist Workers Party and aid the fight to get on the ballot? See page 8 for the campaign office nearest you. See endorser card on facing page or email: socialistworkers2020@gmail.com

Socialist Workers Party campaign button



Available from campaign offices listed on page 8

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



August 21, 1995

PHILADELPHIA — Supporters of Black activist Mumia Abu-Jamal cheered as Judge Albert Sabo issued a stay of execution August 7. The ruling means that the death warrant for August 17 will not be carried out. Abu-Jamal, however, will remain on death row.

The much smaller number of armed and uniformed cops in the courtroom sat grimfaced. Abu-Jamal was framed up, convicted, and sentenced to death in 1982 for the murder of police officer Daniel Faulkner. Hearings on his appeal for a new trial will continue.

Demonstrations have taken place in more than 50 cities in the United States since governor [Tom] Ridge signed the death sentence June 2. On August 1, some 200 prisoners at the Maximum Security Federal Prison in Lewisburg ran a total of 500 miles around the prison yard in solidarity with Abu-Jamal.



August 7, 1970

CENTER, Colo. — Center is the scene of a strike by Chicano workers that began June 2. The more than 100 strikers and their families are demanding a pay raise, the right to collective bargaining, recognition of their union, and an end to the use of child labor.

The powers-that-be have resorted to all kinds of harassment of the strikers. They have been prevented from holding meetings in a number of places. “We’ve been harassed by the police a lot,” said strike leader Len Avila, “and especially by the sheriff who has two relatives who are running scab crews.”

“The longer the grower holds out the harder it’s going to be for him to negotiate because we’re getting smarter every day,” predicts Avila. “I think we are going to have a victory because our eyes are opening, our minds are opening,” explained [striker] Orlinda de Varga.



August 18, 1945

The second imperialist world war has ended. Six years of slaughter and devastation have been brought to an awful climax with the atomic bomb against the people of Japan.

All ruling class propaganda is mobilized to deceive the masses into thinking that the end of the war means the dawn of true and lasting peace and that peace can be preserved without revolutionary social change.

There can be leisure and comfort and cultural advancement for every man, woman and child on earth. All on one condition—that capitalism, the strangler of human progress, is destroyed! Working men and women in the factories and on the farms! The Trotskyists summon you to the struggle for the socialist revolution! Enlist with us in the battle for a new world in which permanent peace and well-being will be assured for all!

Workers fight boss attacks

Continued from front page
manding unpaid wages and improvements in working conditions. It comes on top of a long strike at the Haft Tappeh sugar refinery and by workers at industrial facilities in the city of Arak.

The strike wave began July 28 after Ebrahim Arabzadeh, a contract worker at the Mahshahr petrochemical complex, died from exhaustion after being forced to work in blistering heat.

Within a few days, 10,000 contract workers were on strike. They are protesting low wages, the fact their jobs aren't guaranteed and poor living conditions. They are demanding reduced work hours in temperatures over 120 degrees Fahrenheit. The strikers work for employment agencies in the world's largest natural gas field. They say they will stay off work for all this 20-days-on work cycle.

The state-run oil and gas company controls all South Pars projects, but had sought foreign investment partners. French energy giant Total signed on to develop the fields in 2017 but pulled out to avoid sanctions on Iran imposed by Washington. The sanctions have seriously hit the Iranian rulers' economy, but fall hardest on working people.

Conditions in the oil fields underscore the need for workers to fight to control production to defend their safety and health from the profit drive of the bosses.

"Iranian workers have proved time and again that no amount of repression will silence them," said Kemal Ozkan, IndustriALL union federation assistant general secretary, supporting the oil workers strike.

Virus lockdowns extend slump

In response to the spread of coronavirus, capitalist bosses and their governments worldwide shut down production and trade, leading to the sharpest economic contraction in most countries since World War II. In the U.S. and Germany, the gross domestic product — the total of all production and service activity — contracted by 10% in the second quarter. Other European economies contracted more.

Tens of millions of workers have been thrown out on the street.

The World Trade Organization expects global merchandise trade to fall between 13% and 32% in 2020.

The U.S. capitalist rulers, who preside over the world's largest economy and strongest currency, stepped in to try and prevent the crisis from deepening — and to protect the interests of U.S. bosses and bankers. In March, as governments worldwide initiated shutdowns, the Federal Reserve Bank extended unprecedented loans to foreign central banks to help prevent a collapse of world markets.

This further increased the weight of the dollar as the world's central currency and as a weapon of Washington's foreign policy.

U.S. unemployment crisis grows

Applications for unemployment benefits, sorely needed by those thrown out of work, remain at high levels in the U.S. Some 1.43 million people applied in the week ending July 25. On Aug. 1 special "stimulus" \$600 weekly payouts to workers who get unemployment benefits end. The Pandemic Unemployed Assistance program of weekly \$600 payouts to self-employed, independent contractor and gig-economy workers also ran out. Special measures against evictions of workers who find it impossible to pay rent also expired.

Wherever lockdowns are relaxed, the bosses are taking steps to return to profitability by stepping up production with a leaner workforce toiling under meaner conditions — forcing fewer workers to work faster for less.

Expanding struggles by workers to meet these attacks are crucial. Every one deserves the broadest solidarity.

Philadelphia Greyhound workers resist layoffs, speedup, attack on wages

BY OSBORNE HART

PHILADELPHIA — Greyhound station workers here, organized by Teamsters Local 623, and other union supporters held an informational picket in front of the bus station July 28.

Protests in Russia Far East rock Putin government



Associated Press/Igor Volkov

Tens of thousands of working people in Khabarovsk, a city of 600,000 in Russia's Far East, demonstrated Aug. 1, above, over the Kremlin's July 9 arrest of elected Provincial Gov. Sergei Furgal. The protests have continued for weeks, initially calling for Furgal's release and reinstatement, but now also demanding the resignation of Russian President Vladimir Putin. This is the most sustained political protest movement during Putin's 20-year rule.

Putin just organized a plebiscite that allows him to remain in office until 2036. Toilers there face a deepening capitalist economic crisis, exacerbated by the fall of oil prices, Washington's sanctions and Moscow's ineffectual response to the coronavirus epidemic. The marches have not been attacked by the police, unlike smaller protests led by Putin's more traditional opponents in Moscow and other large cities in the west.

"This is not Moscow, this is not St. Petersburg. This is the Far East," Zoya, a 15-year-old student, told the Aug. 2 *Financial Times*. "People here are different and we don't want to be told what to do by Moscow."

"We are the power here," chanted thousands as they marched through the center of the former capital of Russia's sprawling hinterland along the Pacific coast. The Khabarovsk Krai region is seven time zones ahead of Moscow and stretches from the border with China to the Arctic. After Furgal's election, Putin had the capital of the Far Eastern Federal District moved to Vladivostok.

Furgal humiliated Putin's candidate in the elections two years ago. The revival of charges against him, that he organized the killing of rivals in business conflicts almost two decades ago, whether true or not, is widely seen as politically motivated.

Many of the careers of Russia's current political leaders — including Putin — grew out of fierce battles between competing cartels seeking wealth and power, looting the old state industries after the fall of the Soviet Union.

Furgal's arrest is part of the Kremlin's rolling crackdown since the plebiscite. Turnout in the Far East was among the lowest in the country.

— ROY LANDERSEN

Fight for health care to treat everyone, not to make profit

BY RÓGER CALERO

The big-business press tells us COVID-19 is "the great equalizer," that it strikes without regard to "wealth, fame, and prestige." And, most importantly, they tell us, "We're all in this together." But these claims are lies that clash with the grim reality faced by millions of working people in the U.S. and around the world. The fact is, your chance of surviving COVID-19 is determined largely by which side of the class line you are on.

In the early stages of this disease, those who can afford to be treated in well-equipped and adequately staffed private medical centers, with access to specialized and trial medications, sufficient working ventilators, etc., do far better than those who are told to stay home until they're gasping for breath, with their lips and fingernails turning blue; or those who do manage to get a bed, but at an understaffed, crowded public hospital. And especially those who are elderly and get trapped in nursing homes, which in the U.S. have been the main incubators of the disease and of death.

These factors are consistent with what working people face with all illnesses. One example that underscores the truth about health and health care access for working people under capitalism is the current epidemic of diabetes and related amputations.

More than 30 million people in the U.S. have diabetes. Another 84.1 million have prediabetes, which if not treated can lead to diabetes within five years. It is the seventh leading cause of death in the U.S.

The disease can be managed if you have accessible health care. But it is in working-class areas — especially in Appalachia, the South and in urban neighborhoods across the country with large numbers of Blacks and Latinos — that the disease is most prevalent and destructive.

Every 17 seconds someone is diagnosed with diabetes, and every day 230 people will suffer a diabetes-related amputation in the U.S., according to Dr. Foluso A. Fakorede, a specialist whose work has brought attention to the devastating impact of untreated arterial disease among working-class patients.

The rate of amputations across the country grew by 50% between 2009 and 2015, with diabetic patients now undergoing some 130,000 amputations a year. The biggest toll is among the poor and the underinsured, with African Americans losing limbs three times as often as others.

Fakorede says there are relatively simple limb-saving screening and treatment procedures that could be done that could determine whether surgery is needed before applying a blade to a diabetic patient. But those are not being promoted by the medical "establishment."

Atherosclerosis and peripheral artery disease are common circulatory problems among patients with uncontrolled diabetes. This can complicate the healing of a blister or foot injury, and turn them into a life-threatening infection that requires amputation.

By performing an angiogram — an imaging test that shows precisely where blood flow is blocked — millions of amputations could be prevented by cleaning the arteries out and widening the blood vessels, says Fakorede. But, as *ProPublica* magazine said in May, "General surgeons have a financial incentive to amputate; they don't get paid to operate if they recommend saving a limb."

Some 50% of diabetics who undergo amputation die within two years of the surgery, Fakorede says. Once an amputee, they're far more likely to lose their jobs and a productive life. Depression, and the feeling of being a burden to their family, often follows.

"It's the norm to go to Walmart and see an amputation or a permacath [a permanent catheter to facilitate frequent dialysis] in the neck," of fellow shoppers, said a medical device sales rep friend of Fakorede. "If you don't see one, then you didn't stay more than two minutes."

It's common to see relatively young people missing limbs rolling in wheelchairs on the sidewalks of Harlem, Queens or the Bronx, in the Mississippi Delta or Appalachia.

The high rates of diabetes, high blood pressure, obesity, and other so-called comorbidities for COVID-19 among working people in the U.S. are not because of the lack of "awareness," or an "education problem," as the capitalist rulers and Democratic and Republican politicians say, blaming us for getting sick and dying. These are social consequences of capitalist economic relations that determine access to health care, proper nutrition and other necessities.

75 years since US rulers bombed Hiroshima, Nagasaki



On Aug. 6, 1945, and again on Aug. 9 — 75 years ago this month — the capitalist rulers in Washington unleashed nuclear infernos against the Japanese civilian populations of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Hundreds of thousands were instantly incinerated or died agonizingly and slowly from burns or radiation poisoning.

The Aug. 18, 1945, *Militant*, above, carried a front-page statement from the National Committee of the Socialist Workers Party. "The second imperialist world war has ended," the party said. "Six years of wholesale slaughter and devastation have been brought to an awful climax with the discovery of the atomic bomb and its use, with frightful effect, against the people of Japan."

"In two calculated blows," SWP National Secretary James P. Cannon said in a public speech two weeks after the bombings, U.S. imperialism "brought on itself the fear and hatred of the whole world." But, he explained, the U.S. rulers didn't go to war "for moral position, but for profit," to defeat their imperialist rivals and claim the spoils of "the boundless riches of the Orient."

The U.S. rulers have always claimed this slaughter was a necessity to "hasten the end of the war" and prevent further U.S. casualties. But Tokyo was already suing for peace. Washington's use of nuclear weapons was a horrific warning to working people worldwide that U.S. imperialism not only had the bomb but also the ruthlessness to use it.

Fred Halstead, inset, the SWP's presidential candidate in 1968 and a leader of the movement in the U.S. fighting for Washington to get out of Vietnam, represented the party at a series of anti-war conferences in Hiroshima to mark the 23rd anniversary of the atomic bombings.

In contrast to many other countries, Cuba has "never considered producing nuclear weapons," revolutionary leader Fidel Castro said in a 2005 speech. "Our 'nuclear weapon' is the invincible power of moral weapons," the ideas and example of the Cuban Revolution.

"My party calls for Washington's immediate unilateral nuclear disarmament and has done so for 75 years," Alyson Kennedy, the SWP's 2020 candidate for president, said Aug. 1. "Lifting the threat of nuclear holocaust from the world is one more reason for workers to build their own party, a labor party, to fight to take power out of the hands of the warmongers."

— ROY LANDERSEN

One in 10 Americans does not have access to a grocery store that sells fresh food, much less at affordable prices. In 2015, 23.5 million lived in so-called "food deserts" — areas where the majority of residents don't live near a supermarket. The bottom line is, capitalism is bad for your health.

When health care is not for profit

In Cuba, a popular revolution in 1959 eradicated capitalist social relations as workers and farmers took political power and formed their own government. They began to rebuild their health care system after thousands of doctors whose main motivation was to profit from their practice fled to the U.S.

They based the revolution's health care on prioritizing the education and training of large numbers of doctors and other health care workers, who operated out of facilities located in working-class neighborhoods where they lived. They provided health care — especially preventative health care — at no cost to all.

In Cuba, medical and scientific advances serve the needs of working people, and the number of amputations due to diabetic complications is declining.

Since 2007, Heberprot-P, a new kind of therapy for hard-to-heal foot ulcers has been used in health care centers and hospitals throughout the island, showing great results. Diabetes patients treated with Heberprot-P have an amputation rate four times lower than those without. More than 17,000 amputations have been avoided, Cuban newspaper *Adelante* reported last year.

By 2019, more than 300,000 patients in 26 countries had received Heberprot-P treatment. Tens of thousands of volunteer Cuban doctors and nurses provide medical services in the most hard-to-reach parts of countries around the world and also make available vaccines and medications developed in Cuba, like Heberprot-P. And like Interferon Alfa-2B, these are being used to fight the effects of COVID-19.

This is only possible because capitalist relations were overturned in Cuba.

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Sankara: ‘We draw lessons from all the world’s revolutions’

Thomas Sankara Parle, *the French edition of Thomas Sankara Speaks: The Burkina Faso Revolution 1983-87, is one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for August. In 1983 Sankara led an uprising in the former French colony of Upper Volta, bringing to power a popular revolutionary government. He led mobilizations by workers, peasants, women and youth to carry out deep social measures and take control of their own destiny in one of the poorest countries in the world. Sankara was assassinated in a counterrevolutionary coup in 1987. An outstanding communist, he followed the example of Cuban revolutionary leaders Fidel Castro and Che Guevara, using the platform of the United Nations General Assembly on Oct. 4, 1984, to speak out for the oppressed and exploited of the world. That speech, "Freedom Must Be Conquered," is excerpted here. Copyright © 2007 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.*



Militant/Flax Hermes

Popular uprising in Madagascar, which toppled government in 1972, had deep impact on Thomas Sankara, who was a military cadet there. He heard from fellow students about 1968 workers general strike in France, above. Transferred to France by the army, he scoured Paris for books by Karl Marx and other revolutionaries. He learned importance of studying history of class struggle.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY THOMAS SANKARA

I make no claim to lay out any doctrines here. I am neither a messiah nor a prophet. I possess no truths. My only aspiration is twofold: first, to be able to speak on behalf of my people, the people of Burkina Faso, in simple words, words that are clear and factual. And second, in my own way to also speak

on behalf of the “great disinherited people of the world,” those who belong to the world so ironically christened the Third World. And to state, though I may not succeed in making them understood, the reasons for our revolt. ...

This is what we glimpsed — we, the Burkinabè people — during the evening of August 4, 1983, when the first stars began to sparkle in the skies of our homeland. We had to take the leadership of the peasant revolts, signs of which were visible in a countryside that is panic-stricken by the advancing desert, exhausted by hunger and thirst, and abandoned. We had to give meaning to the brewing revolt of the idle urban masses, frustrated and weary of seeing limousines driving the elites around, elites that were out of touch, succeeding one another at the helm of state while offering the urban masses nothing but false solutions elaborated and conceived by the minds of others. We had to give an ideological soul to the just struggles of our popular masses as they mobilized against the monster of imperialism. The passing revolt, the simple brushfire, had to be replaced forever with the revolution, the permanent struggle against all forms of domination. ...

My country is brimming with all the misfortunes of the peoples of the world, a painful synthesis of all humanity's suffering, but also — and above all — of the promise of our struggles. ...

I am acting as spokesperson for all those who vainly seek a forum in this world where they can make themselves heard. So yes, I wish to speak on behalf of all “those left behind,” for “I am human, nothing that is human is alien to me.”

Our revolution in Burkina Faso embraces the misfortunes of all peoples. It also draws inspiration from all of man's experiences since his first breath. We wish to be the heirs of all the world's revolutions and all the liberation struggles of the peoples of the Third World. Our eyes are on the profound upheavals that have transformed the world. We draw the lessons of the American Revolution, the lessons of its victory over colonial domination and the consequences of that victory. We adopt as our own the affirmation of the Doctrine whereby Europeans must not intervene in American affairs, nor Americans in European affairs. Just as Monroe proclaimed “America to the Americans” in 1823, we echo this today by saying

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“Africa to the Africans,” “Burkina to the Burkinabè.”

The French Revolution of 1789, which overturned the foundations of absolutism, taught us the connection between the rights of man and the rights of peoples to liberty. The great revolution of October 1917 [in Russia] transformed the world, brought victory to the proletariat, shook the foundations of capitalism, and made possible the Paris Commune's dreams of justice.

Open to all the winds of the will of the peoples of the world and their revolutions, having also learned from some terrible failures that led to tragic violations of human rights, we wish to retain only the core of purity from each revolution. This prevents us from becoming subservient to the realities of others, even when we share common ground because of our ideas.

Mr. President:

It is no longer possible to keep up the deception. The new international economic order for which we fight and will continue to fight can be achieved only if we succeed in destroying the old order that has ignored us; if we impose our rightful place in the political organization of the world; and if, conscious of our importance in the world, we obtain the right to participate in discussions and decisions on the mechanisms governing trade, the economy, and currencies on a global scale.

The new international economic order should simply be inscribed alongside all the other rights of the people — the right to independence, to the free choice of governmental forms and structures — like the right to development. And like all the peoples' rights, it is conquered in struggle and by the struggle of the people. It will never be the result of an act of generosity from the powers that be.

I personally maintain unshakable confidence — a confidence shared by the immense community of Non-aligned countries — that, under the pounding blows of the howling anguish of our peoples, our group will maintain its cohesion, strengthen its collective bargaining power, find allies among all nations, and begin, together with those who can still hear us, to organize a genuinely new international system of economic relations.

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ALYSON KENNEDY

SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY STATEMENT

Workers need a labor party!



MALCOLM JARRETT

Continued from front page
system onto our backs.

We need to organize a union movement in *every* workplace nationwide to resist the growing attacks on our jobs, wages and working conditions. This movement would defend workers on the job as well as family farmers and all those who are oppressed and exploited by capital. It would be the backbone of our labor party.

We can take important steps forward today by building solidarity with every fight that breaks out — from the strike by shipbuilders against union busting by bosses at Bath Iron Works in Maine, to protests demanding the arrest and prosecution of the cops who killed Breonna Taylor in Louisville, Kentucky.

One of the key challenges workers face is defending our health and safety on the job. We need to wage a fight to wrest control of production from the grasp of the bosses — from line speeds, to the arrangement of work stations, to the size of the workforce, to expansion of plant size if needed, and much more. Work *can* be performed safely, but only when workers are in charge of deciding what is necessary to stop the spread of coronavirus, injuries and deaths on the job. As the bosses reopen workplaces and public transport, or debate starting up schools again, workers in these industries waging such a struggle is the only way to protect our lives and those of our families and community.

As workers gain experience exercising control over what is produced and how, we can see that our class can and should run the entire economy.

My party calls for the labor movement to fight for a government-funded public works program to put tens of millions back to work at union scale pay. Such a

program, run by the workers involved, can build hospitals, safe workplaces, schools and housing, and other things working people sorely need.

Getting workers back on the job will end demoralizing isolation and undercut the ability of the bosses to pit unemployed and employed workers against each other and attack us all.

Unions need to speak out against every example of exploitation, racism, attacks on women and undocumented workers, and explain why workers *are* capable of uniting to fight to end these conditions. We will gain class consciousness and learn our own self-worth.

Building a labor party out of these struggles will give us the political tool we need not only to defend our class interests, but also to chart a course to take political power out of the hands of the propertied rulers and establish a workers and farmers government. Workers and farmers in Cuba, led by Fidel Castro and the July 26 Movement, showed that making a socialist revolution and transforming social relations is not only necessary but possible.

From the mass battles that won the right of women to vote 100 years ago this month or built the industrial union movement in the 1930s to the Black-led popular movement that tore down Jim Crow segregation, the working-class has a proud record of courageous and disciplined struggle. But to truly end the dictatorship of capital, and open the door to a new future for all humanity, we need to take power into our own hands.

To advance this perspective, the SWP is running and campaigning on a fighting working-class program in 2020. Join our fight to get on the ballot in as many states as possible!

Pennsylvania officials revoke prison ‘Militant’ ban

Continued from front page

issue and her office would review it.

“The Policy Office is reversing the SCI denial,” Woodside wrote Aug. 3. “The publication will be delivered to the inmate.”

The *Militant* intends to check with him to make sure he got it.

“We fight every time prison officials anywhere try to ban the paper, and in most cases we win,” said editor John Studer. “Prisoners have the right to read the political views they’re interested in, to hear about and speak out on political questions and social struggles.”

The inmate had sent the *Militant* the form he was given, which justified the confiscation on the basis of pages 3 and 4 in the issue. But they didn’t offer any reason why the news stories on those pages would “create a danger within the context of the correctional facility.”

In fact what those articles describe are protests demanding the prosecution of police officers who killed

Breonna Taylor in Louisville, Kentucky, and Elijah McClain in Aurora, Colorado, as well as reports on the Socialist Workers Party presidential campaign. The “dangerous” pages include a picture of Alyson Kennedy, the party’s candidate for president, and Malcolm Jarrett for vice president joining striking shipyard workers in Bath, Maine, on their picket line to offer solidarity. Page 4 also reprints the party’s 2020 campaign platform.

Pennsylvania prisons are home to the second largest number of inmate subscribers after Florida. Had authorities at Camp Hill followed their own rules and informed state prison officials of their ban, all other prisons across the state would have been told to impound that issue.

“Fighting every ban on the *Militant* is part of the broader working-class struggle against attacks on political rights and free speech,” Studer said.

According to their records, the *Militant* has never been banned in the Pennsylvania prison system.

LETTERS

Learned about SWP too late?

I’m writing to thank you for the subscription to your paper. I enjoy reading it and when I’m finished, I make it available to others. The articles in your paper make it clear that we need a major change in government.

The only way we will get that change is for the American people to wake up and start voting for politicians that have the people’s best interest in mind. The Republican and Democratic parties only have the interest of their rich capitalist political supporters, and the many special interest groups that currently run this country in mind.

I’m glad to know that there is a political party for the working

people. Unfortunately, I didn’t know about you until I starting receiving your newspaper. Now that I’m in prison, I lost my voting rights and can no longer vote.

Thank you.
A prisoner
Ohio

‘Militant’ Prisoners’ Fund

The fund makes it possible to send prisoners reduced rate subscriptions. Send a check or money order payable to the ‘Militant’ and earmarked “Prisoners’ Fund” to 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018. Or donate online at www.themilitant.com

Editor’s note: Thanks for your letter, glad to know you like the *Militant* and help get it around to other workers behind bars. The Socialist Workers Party stands for the right to vote of prisoners and former prisoners like all the rest of us. You are entitled to get involved in politics, to follow what is happening in the class struggle and express your opinions no matter what side of the prison walls you happen to be on at the moment.

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of interest to working people. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

Intervention in Libya

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On one side is the Government of National Accord in Tripoli, headed by Prime Minister Fayez al-Sarraj, which was cobbled together in a U.N.-brokered deal in 2015. It remains in power in the capital with the backing of the Turkish, Qatari and Italian rulers.

Arrayed against them are the disparate forces of the Libyan National Army commanded by Gen. Khalifa Haftar, based in the eastern part of the country. Over the last year Haftar has seized control of most of Libya, with support and large-scale military aid from the governments of Russia, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates and France.

Last month the Wagner Group, mercenary forces organized by Moscow, seized the country’s biggest oilfield, which is partly owned by Repsol, a Spanish company. They also took over Es Sider, Libya’s main oil-exporting port.

For the most part Washington hasn’t thrown its weight decisively behind either faction.

When Haftar, backed by Russian mercenaries and Moscow’s air power, was on the brink of taking Tripoli, the Turkish government stepped in with decisive military aid for Sarraj. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan sent military advisers, drones and air defense systems in January, along with 3,800 Turkish-backed Syrian militia fighters, which succeeded in pushing back Haftar’s forces.

Turkish capitalists have longstanding economic interests in Libya. The Turkish Contractors Association estimated that in 2011, when Gadhafi was killed, Turkish capitalists had more than \$18 billion in contracts there. The Turkish government is asking Sarraj to pay for some \$3.7 billion owed to Turkish firms.

At the same time that Erdogan agreed to send more military aid, Sarraj signed a memorandum redrawing Libya’s maritime borders, accepting Turkey’s claim to potential natural gas deposits in large areas of the Mediterranean Sea, also long coveted by the rulers in France and Greece.

When the Turkish forces stepped in and pushed back Haftar, including in an air and ground attack on Sirte, the neighboring Egyptian regime got nervous. Both Erdogan and Sarraj have close ties to the Egyptian government’s main bourgeois rival, the Muslim Brotherhood. Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi came to power by defeating the Brotherhood, and then carrying out systematic repression, arrests and executions against the group’s leadership.

On July 20 the Egyptian parliament unanimously authorized the deployment of troops to Libya.

Impact of war on working people

Over 400,000 Libyans have been forced to flee from their homes, according to the U.N. Much-needed hospital facilities have been attacked during the conflict. Both sides have committed atrocities.

The fighting in Libya is a reflection of the failure of the “Arab Spring,” mass uprisings in 2010 and 2011 that shook, and in some cases toppled, dictatorial governments in Egypt, Morocco, Yemen, Tunisia and Libya. But in the absence of a revolutionary, working-class leadership, the main gain of the mass protests — political space — was pushed back.

When Gadhafi’s regime was overthrown and he was executed, President Barack Obama gloated that “one of the world’s longest-serving dictators is no more.”

His vice president, Joe Biden, who is now the front-runner for the White House, called the assault on Libya a “prescription for how to deal with the world.”

But what followed was a political vacuum, with no working-class leadership to chart a course forward for Libya’s workers and farmers, leading to a new round of imperialist interference, war and crisis for the toilers.

“Working people should condemn the intervention by Washington, Paris” and other imperialist powers “in Libya’s civil war,” and the gruesome execution of Gadhafi, the *Militant* editorialized in 2011. “Toilers and other oppressed layers will have an opportunity to fight for increased space to organize and advance their own interests. Imperialist powers, the enemies of working people the world over, always have been and always will be an obstacle to this struggle.”